

104TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# H. R. 3474

To require health warnings to be included in alcoholic beverage advertisements, and for other purposes.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 16, 1996

Mr. KENNEDY of Massachusetts (for himself, Mr. HINCHEY, Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA, and Mr. FATTAH) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Commerce

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## A BILL

To require health warnings to be included in alcoholic beverage advertisements, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Sensible Advertising  
5 and Family Education Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress makes the following findings:

8 (1) Alcohol is by far the drug most widely used  
9 and abused by young people in the United States  
10 today, even though it is illegal for youths under the

1 age of 21 to purchase alcohol in all 50 of the States  
2 and the District of Columbia.

3 (2) According to the National Institute on Alco-  
4 hol Abuse and Alcoholism, an estimated 18,000,000  
5 persons in the United States who are 18 or older  
6 currently experience problems as a result of alcohol  
7 use. An estimated 4,500,000 young people are de-  
8 pendent on alcohol or are problem drinkers.

9 (3) According to the 1995 National Institute on  
10 Drug Abuse survey of high school students and  
11 young adults (entitled “Monitoring the Future”), 80  
12 percent of high school seniors, 71 percent of tenth  
13 graders, and 56 percent of eighth graders had used  
14 alcohol at least once. Twenty-eight percent of high  
15 school seniors, 24 percent of tenth graders, and 15  
16 percent of eighth graders had experienced a “binge”  
17 of 5 or more drinks in a row within the past 2  
18 weeks. Among college students, 88 percent reported  
19 having used alcohol and 40 percent reported occa-  
20 sions of binge drinking, including 31 percent of the  
21 females and 52 percent of the males.

22 (4) The average age at which young people  
23 begin drinking is 13. By age 13, approximately 30  
24 percent of boys and 22 percent of girls classify  
25 themselves as drinkers. According to the 1995

1 “Monitoring the Future” survey, 14 percent of high  
2 school seniors reported having been drunk by eighth  
3 grade, 30 percent by ninth grade, 43 percent by  
4 tenth grade, and 60 percent by twelfth grade. Stud-  
5 ies demonstrate that the use of alcohol before the  
6 age of 15 appears to be one of the predictors of later  
7 heavy alcohol and other drug use.

8 (5) According to a national survey on youth and  
9 alcohol (Inspector General of the Department of  
10 Health and Human Services, 1991), the average  
11 binge drinker is a 16 year-old male in the tenth  
12 grade who was 12 years old when he took his first  
13 drink.

14 (6) Young people are not well informed about  
15 the hazards of alcohol use. More than one quarter  
16 of high school seniors do not view taking one or two  
17 drinks nearly every day as entailing great risk. Ap-  
18 proximately 45 percent of eighth graders, 47 percent  
19 of tenth graders, and 53 percent of twelfth graders  
20 do not perceive having 5 or more drinks once or  
21 twice a weekend as entailing a great risk (1995  
22 “Monitoring the Future” survey). More than 2.6  
23 million students do not know a person can die from  
24 an overdose of alcohol. A projected 259,000 students  
25 think that wine coolers or beer cannot get a person

1 drunk, make a person sick, or do as much harm as  
2 other alcoholic beverages (Inspector General of the  
3 Department of Health and Human Services, 1991).

4 (7) According to Healthy People 2000, the Na-  
5 tional Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Ob-  
6 jectives—

7 (A) nearly one-half of all deaths from  
8 motor vehicle crashes are alcohol-related;

9 (B) alcohol is implicated in nearly one-half  
10 of all fatal intentional injuries such as suicides  
11 and homicides; and

12 (C) victims are intoxicated in approxi-  
13 mately one-third of all homicides, drownings,  
14 and boating deaths.

15 (8) An estimated 25 percent of all hospitalized  
16 persons have alcohol-related problems.

17 (9) Alcohol in combination with other drugs is  
18 the leading cause of emergency room drug abuse epi-  
19 sodes.

20 (10) In 1995, chronic liver disease, including  
21 cirrhosis, was the 11th leading cause of death in the  
22 United States. Of 41,000 deaths attributed to liver  
23 disease in the United States, 46 percent diagnosti-  
24 cally were associated with alcohol. Heavy alcohol use  
25 is considered the most important risk factor for

1 chronic liver disease. Even among liver disease  
2 deaths not coded as alcohol-related, approximately  
3 50 percent are thought to be due to alcohol use.

4 (11) Between 5 and 24 percent of hypertension  
5 cases are associated with alcohol. Many cases diag-  
6 nosed as essential hypertension (high blood pressure  
7 having no known causes) may actually have chronic  
8 alcohol ingestion as their cause.

9 (12) Alcohol abuse is strongly associated with  
10 increased risk of cancer, especially cancer of the  
11 liver, esophagus, nasopharynx, and larynx. Alcohol is  
12 also associated with dietary deficiency that may in-  
13 crease cancer risk.

14 (13) Treatment costs for fetal alcohol syndrome  
15 (referred to in this paragraph as “FAS”) and other  
16 alcohol-related birth defects in the United States are  
17 estimated at nearly a third of a billion dollars. FAS  
18 is one of the top 3 known causes of birth defects  
19 with accompanying mental retardation and the only  
20 known preventable cause among the top three.  
21 Among children born to women who drink heavily,  
22 the incidence of FAS may be as high as 25 per  
23 1,000 live births. Among children born to other  
24 women, the FAS incidence is between 1 to 3 infants  
25 with the syndrome per 1,000 live births. The inci-

1        dence of other alcohol-related birth defects is esti-  
2        mated to be 3 times greater than that of FAS.

3            (14) The alcoholic-beverage industry spends ap-  
4        proximately \$2,000,000,000 each year on advertising  
5        and promotions in the United States.

6            (15) Alcohol advertising, especially in the  
7        broadcast media, represents the single greatest  
8        source of alcohol education for persons in the United  
9        States. According to a 1990 study of 10 to 13 year-  
10       olds, funded by the American Automobile Associa-  
11       tion Foundation for Traffic Safety, there is a rela-  
12       tionship between exposure and attention by an indi-  
13       vidual to beer advertising and expectations that the  
14       individual drink as an adult.

15           (16) A major 1981 federally funded study  
16        found a significant relationship between—

17                (A) exposure of individuals to alcoholic-  
18        beverage advertising as youth; and

19                (B) drinking behaviors and attitudes of the  
20        individuals that can lead to certain forms of  
21        problem drinking.

22           (17) According to the Department of Health  
23        and Human Services, sponsorships and promotions  
24        on college campuses by alcohol producers and the

1 use of celebrities and youth-oriented musical groups  
2 in advertising create a pro-drinking environment.

3 (18) Over 80 percent of 2,000 adults surveyed  
4 in 1988 for the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and  
5 Firearms by the Opinion Research Corporation be-  
6 lieve that alcohol advertising influences underage  
7 youth to drink alcoholic beverages. The survey also  
8 found that the general public feels that the young  
9 people of the United States constitute the group that  
10 is most at risk from drinking alcoholic beverages.

11 (19) The 1988 Surgeon General's Workshop on  
12 Drunk Driving has recommended—

13 (A) that the level of alcoholic-beverage ad-  
14 vertising be matched with an equal number of  
15 pro-health and pro-safety messages; and

16 (B) the inclusion of health warning mes-  
17 sages in all alcohol advertising.

18 (20) The National Commission on Drug-Free  
19 Schools' September 1990 Final Report, "Toward a  
20 Drug-Free Generation: A Nation's Responsibility"  
21 recommends that Congress—

22 (A) require additional health and safety  
23 messages on all alcohol products and advertis-  
24 ing for the products; and

1 (B) consider enacting a ban on advertising  
2 and promotion of alcohol if alcohol advertising  
3 still targets youth and glamorizes alcohol use  
4 two years following the publication of the re-  
5 port.

6 (21) Over two-thirds of persons surveyed  
7 in a 1989 Wall Street Journal poll favor requir-  
8 ing warnings about the dangers of drinking  
9 both on alcoholic-beverage containers and in al-  
10 cohol advertisements. Nearly three-fourths of  
11 persons surveyed in a 1990 Gallup Poll favor  
12 requiring health warning messages in alcohol  
13 advertising.

14 **SEC. 3. HEALTH WARNINGS.**

15 (a) IN GENERAL.—On and after the expiration of the  
16 6-month period following the date of enactment of this  
17 Act, it shall be an unfair or deceptive act or practice under  
18 section 6 of the Federal Trade Commission Act for any  
19 person to—

20 (1) advertise or cause to be advertised through  
21 magazines, newspapers, brochures, and promotional  
22 displays within the United States any alcoholic bev-  
23 erage unless the advertising bears, in accordance  
24 with requirements of section 3(a), one of the follow-  
25 ing health warnings:



1       **SURGEON GENERAL’S WARNING:** If  
2       you are pregnant, don’t drink. Drinking alcohol  
3       during pregnancy may cause mental retardation  
4       and other birth defects. Avoid alcohol during  
5       pregnancy. If you are pregnant and can’t stop  
6       drinking, call [insert appropriate toll free num-  
7       ber].

8       **SURGEON GENERAL’S WARNING:** Al-  
9       cohol is a drug and may be addictive. If you  
10      know someone who has an alcohol or other drug  
11      problem or has trouble controlling their drink-  
12      ing, call [insert appropriate toll free number].

13      **SURGEON GENERAL’S WARNING:**  
14      Drive sober. If you don’t, you could lose your  
15      driver’s license or even your life. Alcohol im-  
16      pairs your ability to drive a car or operate ma-  
17      chinery. If you or people you love drink and  
18      drive, call [insert appropriate toll free number].

19      **SURGEON GENERAL’S WARNING:**  
20      Don’t mix alcohol with over-the-counter, pre-  
21      scription, or illicit drugs. For more information  
22      call [insert appropriate toll free number].

23      **SURGEON GENERAL’S WARNING:** If  
24      you drink too much alcohol too fast, you can  
25      die. You can be poisoned by alcohol if you drink

1 [insert number of drinks] in [insert time]. To  
2 find out more about alcohol poisoning call [in-  
3 sert appropriate toll free number].

4 **SURGEON GENERAL'S WARNING:**

5 Drinking increases your risks of high blood  
6 pressure, liver disease, and cancer. The more  
7 you drink, the more likely it is that you will  
8 have such health problems. To find out how to  
9 prevent getting such health problems call [in-  
10 sert appropriate toll free number]., or

11 (2) advertise or cause to be advertised through  
12 radio, television broadcasting (including cable broad-  
13 casting and paid per view or subscription television),  
14 or other electronic means any alcoholic beverage un-  
15 less the advertising includes, in accordance with re-  
16 quirements of section 3(b), one of the following  
17 health warnings:

18 **SURGEON GENERAL'S WARNING:** If  
19 you are pregnant, don't drink alcohol. Alcohol  
20 may cause mental retardation and other birth  
21 defects.

22 **SURGEON GENERAL'S WARNING:** Al-  
23cohol is a drug and may be addictive.

1           **SURGEON GENERAL’S WARNING:**

2           Drive sober. If you don’t, you could lose your  
3           driver’s license or even your life.

4           **SURGEON GENERAL’S WARNING:**

5           Don’t mix alcohol with over-the-counter, pre-  
6           scription, or illicit drugs.

7           **SURGEON GENERAL’S WARNING:** If

8           you drink too much alcohol too fast, you can die  
9           of alcohol poisoning.

10          **SURGEON GENERAL’S WARNING:**

11          Drinking too much alcohol increases your risk  
12          of high blood pressure, liver disease, and can-  
13          cer.

14          (b) TOLL FREE NUMBERS.—The Secretary of Health  
15          and Human Services shall be responsible for establishing  
16          and maintaining the toll free numbers referred to in the  
17          health warnings required by subsection (a)(1). The Sec-  
18          retary shall report to Congress annually on the number  
19          of calls received using those numbers.

20          **SEC. 4. REQUIREMENTS.**

21          (a) IN GENERAL.—The health warnings required for  
22          alcoholic beverage advertisements by section 3(a)(1)  
23          shall—

24                  (1) be located in a conspicuous and prominent  
25          place on each such advertisement, as determined by

1 the Secretary of Health and Human Services in reg-  
2 ulations to take effect no later than 6 months after  
3 the date of the enactment of this Act,

4 (2) shall require that all the regulations issued  
5 by the Secretary under paragraph (1) shall require  
6 that all letters in such health warnings appear in  
7 conspicuous and legible type that is not script or  
8 italic and that such health warnings be in contrast  
9 by typography, layout, and color with all other print-  
10 ed material in the advertisement, be surrounded by  
11 typographic lines that form a box, and, on an appro-  
12 priate visual medium, appear on the front of an ad-  
13 vertisement as indicated by labeling of the manufac-  
14 turer or importer, and

15 (3) be rotated in an alternating sequence on  
16 each advertisement of a brand style in accordance  
17 with a plan submitted by such manufacturer or im-  
18 porter to the Secretary.

19 The Secretary shall approve a plan submitted under para-  
20 graph (3) by a manufacturer or importer that assures that  
21 each sequence of the same or substantially similar adver-  
22 tisement for a brand style has displayed upon it an equal  
23 distribution of each health warning at the same time. If  
24 an application is approved by the Secretary, the rotation  
25 shall apply with respect to the applicant during the one-

1 year period beginning on the date of the application ap-  
2 proval.

3 (b) RADIO AND TELEVISION.—

4 (1) WARNINGS.—The health warnings required  
5 for alcoholic beverage advertisements placed on radio  
6 or television broadcasting by section 2(a)(2) shall—

7 (A) be included in a conspicuous and  
8 prominent manner in such advertisement, as  
9 determined by the Secretary of Health and  
10 Human Services in regulations to take effect  
11 not later than 6 months after the date of the  
12 enactment of this Act, and

13 (B) be rotated in an alternating sequence  
14 on each such advertisement of a brand style in  
15 accordance with a plan submitted by such man-  
16 ufacturer or importer to the Secretary.

17 The Secretary shall approve a plan submitted under  
18 subparagraph (B) by a manufacturer or importer  
19 that assures that an equal distribution of each of the  
20 health warnings is displayed on each sequence of the  
21 same or substantially similar advertisement for a  
22 brand style at the same time. If an application is ap-  
23 proved by the Secretary, the rotation shall apply  
24 with respect to the applicant during the one-year pe-

1       riod beginning on the date of the application ap-  
2       proval.

3           (2) REGULATIONS.—The regulations issued by  
4       the Secretary under paragraph (1) shall require—

5           (A) that such health warnings be read as  
6       part of an alcoholic beverage advertisement in  
7       an audible and deliberate manner and in a  
8       length of time that allows for a clear under-  
9       standing of the health warning message by the  
10      intended audience, and

11          (B) that for television a graphic represen-  
12      tation of such health warning be included after  
13      each advertisement, that all letters in such  
14      health warning appear in conspicuous and leg-  
15      ible type that is not script or italic, that such  
16      health warning be surrounded by typographic  
17      lines that form a box, and that such health  
18      warning appear in the same length of time si-  
19      multaneously with the reading of the message  
20      required by subparagraph (A).

21 **SEC. 5. DEFINITIONS.**

22       As used in this Act—

23           (1) the term “alcoholic beverage” includes any  
24      beverage in liquid form which contains not less than

1       one-half of one percent of alcohol by volume and is  
2       intended for human consumption,

3               (2) the term “person” includes a State, a State  
4       agency, or an officer or employee of a State or State  
5       agency, and

6               (3) the term “State” includes—

7                       (A) any political subdivision of a State,

8                       (B) the District of Columbia,

9                       (C) the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico,

10                      (D) the Commonwealth of the Northern  
11       Mariana Islands,

12                      (E) Guam,

13                      (F) the Virgin Islands,

14                      (G) American Samoa,

15                      (H) Wake Island,

16                      (I) the Midway Islands,

17                      (J) Kingman Reef, and

18                      (K) Johnston Island.

19   **SEC. 6. REPORT TO CONGRESS.**

20       (a) INVESTIGATION.—Not earlier than 2 years after  
21 the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of  
22 Health and Human Services shall conduct an appropriate  
23 investigation and consult with the Surgeon General to de-  
24 termine whether available scientific information would jus-

1 tify a change in, an addition to, or deletion of, a health  
2 warning set forth in section 3.

3 (b) REPORT.—If the Secretary of Health and Human  
4 Services finds that available scientific information would  
5 justify the change, addition, or deletion described in sub-  
6 section (a), the Secretary shall promptly submit a report  
7 to the appropriate committees of Congress containing—  
8 (1) the information; and  
9 (2) specific recommendations for such amend-  
10 ments to this Act as the Secretary determines to be  
11 appropriate and in the public interest.

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